The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

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AGITATE ! EDUCATE ! ORGANIZE !

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CUMMINS RAIL BILL CAUGHT IN DEADLOCK

Washington, Jan. 31.—The Cummins and Esch railroad bills passed by the senate and house respectively several weeks ago, are in conference, with the conferees deadlocked. At this writing there is no prospect of reaching a compromise.

The more this legislation is discussed by the public the stronger the opposition grows, and it is whispered that in view of the fall elections, some senators and congressmen would like to see it die if the bills never get out of conference.

Strong differences center around the Cummins bill, with its "anti-strike" provision and the section guaranteeing dividends to railroad owners. The intent of the labor section is understood by the workers, and as the average congressman has troubles enough now, he is not willing to take on excess baggage.

The guarantee is beginning to interest shippers and public utilities, and public officials who have studied the railway problem, declare that it will be necessary to raise freight rates to pay the guarantee. The estimated increase ranges from 25 to 40 per cent. Director General of Railroads Hines has stated increase living costs $4,000,000,000 a year.

To add to the tangle, the president has announced that he will order 1,000 locomotives built on March 1, and state officials declare that the people should not be robbed of the rights of the states, while the American Federation of Labor, the railroad brotherhoods and others are insisting that the government hold the roads for at least two years that a test may be made of government operation under normal conditions.

Far-seeing advocates of an immediate increase in rates are displaced between two fires. If the roads are guaranteed they will have to be raised. One does not have to be a prophet to say that storms of protest will also be raised. And the government-ownership advocate will smile. If the private ownership advocates agree to a two-years' extension, they fear government ownership propaganda will not cease their propaganda.

Under the Cummins bill 10 conferees in charge of the two railroad bills will be grateful for a solution of their troubles.

RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC.

New York, Jan. 31.—Coal Age, a magazine published in the interests of the coal industry, calls attention to changes from the days when the rights of citizens were so sacred that how the cry is for the rights of the public, typified at the time of the coal

"Looking back in the laws of earlier days," says the editor, "it may be seen that it was only found necessary necessary to protect the individual than the public. Treason was the only crime of treason, the most abhorrent of crimes, the British law-makers found the right to make 35 peremptory challenges, whereas the public in its phraseology termed the prisoner was entitled to challenge a single witness without giving to the latter reasonable excuse for such a challenge. In criminal cases in our own land the accused is given more peremptory challenges than the accuser in some jurisdictions.

"The basic principle underlying is clear. The public has a large interest in the suppression of treasonable and criminal practices, but the courts will go on in reasonably comfortable conditions if some of the guilty parties escape unconvicted, whereas the accused if convicted must pay with his life or his liberty, about all that he has."

MUST PAY TEACHERS.

New York, Jan. 31.—State Commissioner of Education Finley calls on every community in this state to realize that the minimum salary for teachers must be sufficient to meet living conditions.

"A large percentage of teachers," he said, "are leaving the service to enter other professions and all because something must be done of a fundamental, thorough-going nature to make it possible for teachers to live. Induce our best young men and women in the schools and colleges to enter this high calling.

"As an officer of the state, charged with certain responsibilities, touching the schools, I am under obligation to declare that the conditions under certain existing conditions that endanger the efficiency of the whole public school system. At a time when greater demands are made upon public education than ever before, and in the history of our country, we are confronted with a situation which, if seeing both in the number and in the professional training of our teaching force."

DON'T KNOW WAR IS OVER.

Tacoma, Wash., Jan. 31.—Wood working plants that employed women during the war as a patriotic duty do not know the war is over, and are still paying low wages, according to B. Evans, president of the state association of carpenters, in a speech in this city.

The speaker said that the labor cost of manufacturing a standard size fir door is about 26 cents, and that if these same doors are made of horizontal wage advance of 20 per cent it would amount to only $1 for the 10 doors used in an ordinary five-room house.

METAL TRADES CONFER.

Tacoma, Wash., Jan. 31.—Delegates from the coast states were in attendance at a conference of the Pacific coast metal trades council, held in this city.

The uniform card system was adopted. This will entitle the holder to work on the coast without transferring.

CAN'T RAISE CAR FARES.

New York, Jan. 31. — Where a street car franchise calls for a cost fare the public service commission has no power to permit fares to be increased, in the opinion of the appellate branch of the supreme court.

UNITING METAL WORKERS.

Hamilton, Ontario, Jan. 31.—Metal working trade unionists have started an organization campaign that will not stop, they declare, until a 100 per cent membership is registered in this city.

STATE UNIONS TO MEET.

Cleburne, Texas, Jan. 31.—Officers of the state federation of labor have issued the call for the annual convention, to be held in this city, starting April 26.

GOUGERS ARE "REDS" SAYS U. S. SENATOR

Washington, Jan. 31.—"When it comes to profiteers, Americans are in a pitiful minority," declared Mr. Capper of Kansas, in a speech in the senate. He said:

"We deport the reds, and I believe in the government's efforts in that direction, but our chief trouble makers, the price gougers, we still let run wild. If we were to put half as many profiteers in jail, it seems to me we would be in far less danger of contamination from the 'reds.'

"The Kansas lawmaker showed that the net profits of the American Woolen company, after federal taxes had been deducted, were $8,215,000 in 1918, $6,102,236 in 1916, $5,210,761 in 1916, $15,664,955 in 1917 and $13,524,094 in 1918. These profits were made on an invested capital of $22,000,000.

"A year ago," said Senator Capper, "the watered stock of the American Woolen company, the chief textile company of the United States was quoted on the stock exchange at 45. Today it is close to 150 and in recent weeks it has been quoted at 156.

"For the wool that goes into a suit of clothes which sells for $40 the wool grower receives $7.37, says the Wool Growers' association. This means that the wool grower and the consumer more than 12 times the price of the raw material."

WORKERS WANT EDUCATION.

Washington, Jan. 31.—In a press bulletin issued by the federal board for vocational education, it is stated that in connection with